

House to come together to pass the Leahy-Crapo Violence Against Women Reauthorization Act. I expressed hope because I thought there was a basis for compromise on a provision that had been a sticking point for House Republicans. I am dismayed that we have not seen progress toward that compromise despite my outreach and the urgency of the situations for thousands of victims of domestic and sexual violence.

Senator CRAPO and I included in our bill a key provision to allow tribal courts limited jurisdiction to consider domestic violence offenses committed against Indian women on tribal lands by non-Indians. The epidemic of violence against Native women is appalling, with a recent study finding that almost three in five Native women have been assaulted by their spouses or intimate partners. This provision would help end an untenable situation where non-Indians assaulting their spouses or intimate partners on tribal land are essentially immune from prosecution.

This is a commonsense proposal with important limitations and guarantees of rights, but I know that House Republicans have continued to object to it. That is why I was heartened when two conservative House Republicans with leadership positions introduced a bill providing a compromise on the tribal jurisdiction provision.

Representative ISSA of California and Representative COLE of Oklahoma introduced the Violence Against Indian Women Act, H.R. 6625. Their cosponsors include Republicans from North Carolina, Minnesota, and Idaho. They all have tribes within their States and are concerned about the violence our Senate bill is trying to combat. Their bill includes a provision that allows defendants to remove a case to Federal court if any defendant's rights are violated. This modification should ensure that only those tribes that are following the requirements of the law and providing full rights can exercise jurisdiction and that defendants can raise challenges at the beginning of a case.

Last week, I called on House Republican leadership to abandon their "just say no" approach to any grant of tribal jurisdiction and give serious consideration to the Republican compromise proposal introduced last week. I have heard that Republican leaders are meeting today to finally discuss the issue. It is my hope that they will show real leadership by supporting crucial protections for tribal women, rather than offering empty proposals that do not change existing law and will not move us forward or help us to address this crisis.

I have reached out to House leaders throughout the year and very recently to find a path forward on VAWA, and I know others have conducted similar outreach. While I am very disappointed that I have yet to see meaningful movement despite the opportunity for reasonable, bipartisan compromise to enact this needed legislation, I do be-

lieve House leaders still have an opportunity to do the right thing and pass VAWA, but that window is closing.

Passing the Leahy-Crapo VAWA bill will make a difference. It will lead to a greater focus on the too often neglected problem of sexual assault and rape. It will lead to important new programs to identify high risk cases and prevent domestic violence homicides. It will lead to better protections for students on campuses across the country and better housing protections for victims of domestic and sexual violence. These improvements are most meaningful if they apply to all victims. I am willing to explore compromise language to make progress, but we should not leave out the most vulnerable victims.

As partisan objections continue to hold up this bill, we continue to read each week about new and horrific cases of domestic violence and rape. It is heartbreaking that women continue to suffer as our efforts to compromise and pass this crucial legislation hit roadblock after roadblock. I hope that our last ditch effort will finally break this frustrating impasse.

TRAFFICKING VICTIMS PROTECTION REAUTHORIZATION ACT

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, as the end of this Congress quickly approaches, I urge the Senate—Republicans, Democrats, and Independents—to come together and pass our bipartisan Trafficking Victims Protection Reauthorization Act.

More than a century after the Emancipation Proclamation and despite the fact that slavery is now illegal everywhere in the world, modern-day slavery, or human trafficking, still occurs throughout the world—including in the United States of America. The Polaris Project estimates that there are more than 27 million victims of human trafficking worldwide today. To put that in perspective, that is more people than the population of Texas.

The Trafficking Victims Protection Reauthorization Act is a bipartisan bill that was carefully crafted with the input of victims and service providers to reflect critical improvements to existing law. I have worked hard to try to address concerns expressed by Republican Senators and to ensure bipartisan support for this legislation, which Congress has reauthorized three times before. The result is that our current bill, which was voted out of the Senate Judiciary Committee more than a year ago, now has 54 cosponsors—including 14 Republicans.

This bipartisan legislation seeks to stop human trafficking at its roots by supporting international and domestic efforts to fight against the causes and punish the perpetrators of trafficking. It also provides critical resources to help support victims as they rebuild their lives. We have included new accountability measures to ensure that Federal funds are used for their in-

tended purposes, and we have streamlined programs to focus scarce resources on the approaches that have been the most successful.

Earlier this week, several Senators spoke on the floor of the Senate in commemoration of Human Rights Day. I was pleased to see that Senator RUBIO, with whom I have worked on this issue, mentioned the need to pass our anti-trafficking bill by the end of the year. We agree that it is imperative for the Senate to act now so that we can take steps toward ending human trafficking and providing the survivors with the support they desperately need in order to get back on their feet.

I have checked with my caucus to see if we can move this bill today. I can report that every Democratic Senator has agreed to pass this legislation now by unanimous consent. I hope my friends on the other side of the aisle will join us to pass the Trafficking Victims Protection Reauthorization Act without further delay.

This is the type of bipartisan bill about an urgent human rights issue that should pass by unanimous consent. I hope we can work together TODAY to make that happen.

The United States remains a beacon of hope for so many who face human rights abuses. We know that young women and girls—often just 11, 12, or 13 years old—are being bought and sold. We know that workers are being held and forced into labor against their will. No one should further delay action while these injustices continue. I am calling on Congress to do the right thing and enact the Trafficking Victims Protection Reauthorization Act before the end of this year. Millions of people around the world are counting on us and they cannot wait.

NEWEST UNITED STATES COURTHOUSE

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, last Friday, December 7, 2012, the new United States Courthouse in Cedar Rapids, IA was dedicated. This facility was built to replace the previous courthouse, built in 1932, that was closed due to the extensive flood damage that occurred in June 2008.

The new courthouse has five courtrooms and associated facilities for the United States Courts operations and also houses a number of Federal Government agencies. Groundbreaking took place in April 2009. The new courthouse opened to the public on November 5. It is my understanding the courthouse was completed within budget and on time.

At the dedication ceremony last week, the keynote address was delivered by the Honorable David R. Hansen, Senior United States Circuit Judge of the United States Court of Appeals for the Eighth Circuit. I ask unanimous consent that his remarks be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows: